

In the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions/listings of claims in the application:

1. (Cancelled)

2. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim [[1]] 14, wherein the plasticizer is selected from the group consisting of maltodextrin, polydextrose, sucrose, corn syrup solids, and glycerol.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim [[1]] 14, wherein the plasticizer is a mixture containing from about 4% to about 6% corn syrup solids, from about 3% to about 6% polydextrose, from about 0.5% to about 2% sucrose, and from about 0.5% to about 2.5% glycerol, based on the total weight of the farinaceous food mixture.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim [[1]] 14, comprising adding as the plasticizer from about 6 weight percent to about 15 weight percent, based on the total weight of the farinaceous food mixture, one or more of the group consisting of sucrose, maltose, fructose, dextrose, polysaccharides, and edible alcohols.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim [[1]] 14, wherein the farinaceous food mixture is plasticized by contacting said mixture with co-rotating twin extruder screws in the extruder barrel.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim [[1]] 14, wherein the farinaceous food mixture contains at least one material selected from the group consisting of meals, flours, and starches derived from corn, wheat, rice, oats, barley, potatoes, rye, tapioca and other cereal crops, legumes, and tubers.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim [[1]] 14, wherein the farinaceous food mixture contains corn meal.

8. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim [[1]] 14, wherein said nozzle section reduces the cross sectional area of the second extrudate flow by a factor less than 20:1.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim [[1]] 14, wherein said nozzle section reduces the cross sectional area of the second extrudate flow by a factor greater than 4:1.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim [[1]] 14, wherein the fluid additive is colored.

11. (Original) The method of Claim 10, wherein the fluid additive comprises a first color and the farinaceous food mixture comprises a second color.

12. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim [[1]] 14, further comprising between steps (e) and (f), the step of mixing said flavored fluid additive and said second extrudate into a more homogeneous mixture with a static mixing mechanism positioned in said passageway.

13. (Cancelled)

14. (New) A method for producing an expanded, farinaceous food product having enhanced flavor characteristics without the use of a drying oven, said method comprising, in combination, the following steps:

- (a) plasticizing a farinaceous food mixture into a first extrudate flow containing from about 5 weight percent to about 17 weight percent of at least one plasticizer selected from monosaccharides, polysaccharides, and edible alcohols and having a moisture content from about 9 weight percent to about 17 weight percent in an extruder barrel having a barrel pressure equal to or in excess of the vapor pressure of the water in the mixture;
- (b) directing the first extrudate flow from said extruder barrel to a central passageway;
- (c) dividing the first extrudate flow into a plurality of adjacent flowing extrudate flows;
- (d) injecting a continuous band of flavored fluid additive between said adjacent flowing extrudate flows utilizing a co-injection die insert having at least one capillary channel, wherein said fluid additive is supplied to each capillary channel via a separate channel port in fluid communication with a peripheral reservoir manifold circumscribing said central passageway;
- (e) coalescing the plurality of adjacent flowing extrudate flows into a second extrudate flow while generally maintaining the fluid additive's relative position between the plurality of adjacent flowing extrudate flows; and
- (f) extruding the second extrudate flow through a nozzle section into a zone of ambient pressure below the vapor pressure of the water in the mixture;

thereby producing a crisp flavored product having a moisture content from about 4 weight percent to about 8 weight percent and a water activity from about 0.30 to about 0.45.

15. (New) A method for producing an expanded, farinaceous food product having enhanced flavor characteristics without the use of a drying oven, said method comprising, in combination, the following steps:

- (a) plasticizing a farinaceous food mixture into a first extrudate flow in an extruder barrel having a barrel pressure equal to or in excess of the vapor pressure of the water in the mixture;
- (b) directing the first extrudate flow from said extruder barrel to a central passageway;
- (c) dividing the first extrudate flow into a plurality of adjacent extrudate flows;
- (d) injecting a continuous band of flavored fluid additive between said adjacent extrudate flows utilizing a co-injection die insert having at least one capillary channel, wherein said fluid additive is supplied to each capillary channel via a separate channel port in fluid communication with a peripheral reservoir manifold circumscribing said central passageway;
- (e) coalescing the plurality of adjacent extrudate flows into a second extrudate flow while generally maintaining the fluid additive band's relative position between the plurality of adjacent extrudate flows; and
- (f) extruding the second extrudate flow through a nozzle section into a zone of ambient pressure below the vapor pressure of the water in the mixture.

16. (New) The method of Claim 15, wherein said injecting step further comprises supplying said peripheral reservoir manifold with said fluid additive via a supply port in fluid communication with a fluid additive source.

17. (New) The method of Claim 15, wherein said injecting step further comprises dividing said peripheral reservoir manifold into a plurality of segregated quadrants, wherein each capillary channel is supplied with said fluid additive from a separate quadrant of said manifold.

18. (New) The method of Claim 17, wherein a first quadrant supplies a first fluid additive to a first capillary channel and a second quadrant supplies a second fluid additive to a second capillary channel.

19. (New) The method of Claim 18, wherein said injecting step further comprises supplying said first quadrant with said first fluid additive via a first supply port in fluid communication with a first fluid additive source and supplying said second quadrant with said second fluid additive via a second supply port in fluid communication with a second fluid additive source.

19. (New) The method of Claim 15, wherein the farinaceous food mixture contains at least one material selected from the group consisting of meals, flours, and starches derived from corn, wheat, rice, oats, barley, potatoes, rye, tapioca and other cereal crops, legumes, and tubers.

20. (New) The method of Claim 15, wherein said nozzle section reduces the cross sectional area of the second extrudate flow by a factor less than 20:1.

21. (New) The method of Claim 15, wherein said nozzle section reduces the cross sectional area of the second extrudate flow by a factor greater than 4:1.

22. (Original) The method of Claim 15, wherein the fluid additive comprises a first color and the farinaceous food mixture comprises a second color.

23. (New) The method of Claim 15, further comprising between steps (e) and (f), the step of mixing said flavored fluid additive and said second extrudate into a more homogeneous mixture with a static mixing mechanism positioned in said passageway.